Chapter 124: Shadow Warrior
THIRTY-ONE YEARS AFTER THE DEATH OF HIMMEL THE HERO
IMPERIAL TERRITORY AUFGABE FEDERATION
RADAAL.
YOU'RE ALWAYS UP SO EARLY.
WHAT NICE WEATHER.
YEAH.
THE SAME NICE WEATHER AS ALWAYS.
MY LEGS ARE TIRED. I CAN'T KEEP GOING...
WHY DO WE HAVE TO GO THROUGH THIS MUDDY FOREST?
WE HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE.
THIS IS THE ONLY ROAD THAT LEADS TO THE IMPERIAL CAPITAL.
RUSTLE
WHAT ROAD?
RUSTLE
WHERE DO YOU SEE A ROAD HERE?
YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE STRUGGLING TO WALK. STOP COMPLAINING.
Don't whine...
THIS IS TOO MUCH TO HANDLE FOR YOU, HUH?
DO YOU NEED A PIGGY-BACK RIDE?
GET ON HIS BACK!
GO ON!
STOP! I WAS KIDDING!
WORN OUT
WE'VE FINALLY REACHED A VILLAGE...
LET'S FIND AN INN FIRST.
WE'RE JUST STOPPING TO REST SO WE CAN REGAIN OUR ENERGY.
THEN BACK TO THE BAD ROAD?
120
OH, WOW!
WE RARELY SEE ADVENTURERS AROUND HERE!
EVER SINCE THE BIG MAIN ROAD WAS BUILT NEARBY, HARDLY ANYONE USES THIS MOUNTAIN PATH.
I REALLY MISS THE DAYS WHEN THIS PLACE WAS FILLED WITH ADVENTURERS.
MISTRESS FRIEREN...?
I AM NOT UP-TO-DATE WITH THE LATEST NEWS.
YES, IT'S BEEN ABOUT 30 YEARS SINCE THEY BUILT THE MAIN ROAD.
SHE'S SUCH A GRANNY...
MUTTER
SHH
SHE'LL HEAR YOU.
121
THANK YOU SO MUCH, MR. MAYOR.
MY DAUGHTER HAS RECOVERED FROM HER ILLNESS THANKS TO THE HERBS YOU SHARED.
DON'T MENTION IT.
I'M AN OLD MAN WITH NOT MANY YEARS LEFT. IT WOULD'VE BEEN A WASTE FOR ME TO HOARD THEM.
HE'S SOCKED AWAY ENOUGH HAIR-GROWING MEDICINE TO LAST HIM INTO THE AFTERLIFE.
IF IT ACTUALLY WORKED, HOW DID HE END UP LOOKING LIKE THIS?
OH, COME ON.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN "END UP LOOKING LIKE THIS"?
HEY, RADAAL.
TEACH ME HOW TO FISH.
SURE THING.
THEN, LET'S...
MR. MAYOR.
THESE ADVENTURERS ARE LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO STAY FOR THE NIGHT.
OKAY. LET'S WELCOME THEM.
WE HAVEN'T SEEN ANY ADVENTURERS FOR A WHILE...
IT'S NOTHING.
YOU STAY HERE AND PLAY UNTIL I GET BACK.
AND DON'T YOU GO DOWN TO THE RIVER WITHOUT AN ADULT.
...
RADAAL?
I'M RADAAL, THE HEAD OF THIS VILLAGE.
IT'S SMALL, BUT PLEASE STAY AS LONG AS YOU'D LIKE.
...
WE DON'T HAVE AN INN, BUT THERE'S A VACANT HOUSE JUST OVER THERE.
MAKE YOURSELVES AT HOME.
WE APPRECIATE IT.
YOU GUYS ARE ADVENTURERS?
AWESOME! YOU'RE A WARRIOR!
I'VE NEVER MET ONE BEFORE!
DO YOU HAVE A SPECIAL MOVE OR ANYTHING?
YUP. WANNA SEE IT?
THESE FOLKS WOULD LOVE IT IF YOU'D SHARE SOME TALES OF YOUR ADVENTURES WITH THEM. ONLY IF YOU DON'T MIND, OF COURSE.
THERE ISN'T MUCH FOR ENTERTAINMENT IN A VILLAGE LIKE THIS, YOU SEE.
WE JUST WORK IN THE FIELDS EVERY DAY.
YOU STILL WORK IN THE FIELDS YOURSELF?
I USED TO.
I'M RETIRED NOW.
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
I'M FINE WITH IT.
WHY NOT?
LOOKS LIKE WE'LL GET TO STAY HERE FOR FREE.
...
RADAAL.
THE STORIES THE ADVENTURERS TOLD US WERE SO INTERESTING.
YOU MISSED OUT.
BUT PEOPLE HERE LOVE ASKING ME TO DO THINGS FOR THEM.
SO I'M ALWAYS BUSY WITH TRIVIAL TASKS.
I WANTED TO HEAR THEM TOO, OF COURSE.
THEY LOOK UP TO YOU.
I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE I'M THE MAYOR.
I GOT OLD, HUH...?
WHEN YOU FIRST CAME TO THIS VILLAGE, YOU WERE THE YOUNGEST ONE HERE.
AND YOU WERE THE FIRST TO EXTEND A HELPING HAND...
...TO AN OUTSIDER YOU KNEW NOTHING ABOUT.
I STILL CLEARLY REMEMBER THAT STRANGE-LOOKING SANDWICH YOU GAVE ME THAT DAY.
I'M SORRY IT DIDN'T LOOK SO GREAT.
IT WAS DELICIOUS.
YOUR SANDWICH.
WHAT'S WRONG?
YOU NEVER SAY NICE THINGS LIKE THIS.
... RADAAL.
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN?
NO...
THERE'S JUST ONE LAST TASK I HAVE TO COMPLETE.
I'LL BE BACK.
ALL RIGHT, WAKE ME UP WHEN IT'S MY TURN ON WATCH.
CAN YOU WAKE UP?
JUST KICK ME OFF THE BED.
ISN'T IT A BIT MUCH TO KEEP WATCH LIKE THIS?
THERE WON'T BE MANY MONSTERS SO CLOSE TO THE VILLAGE.
I ASKED THE VILLAGERS ABOUT THE MAYOR...
THEY SAY HE'S JUST AN ORDINARY MAN. THE ONLY THINGS THAT MAKE HIM SPECIAL ARE HOW CALM AND FRIENDLY HE IS.
WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT?
I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY HE'S KEEPING IT A SECRET.
THE MAYOR'S HANDS.
THEY'RE THE HANDS OF A WARRIOR IN ACTIVE SERVICE.
...
THIS IS ONLY KNOWN TO A HANDFUL OF PEOPLE, EVEN IN THE IMPERIAL CAPITAL.
IT'S A TOP-SECRET MISSION.
YOU ARE SHADOW WARRIORS, YOUR ALLEGIANCE PLEDGED TO THE EMPIRE.
YOUR TASK IS TO MONITOR THE PEOPLE WHO TAKE THE MOUNTAIN PATH...
...AND KILL EVERYONE ON THIS LIST.
THIS MOUNTAIN PATH IS THE ONLY WAY TO REACH THE IMPERIAL CAPITAL FROM THE SOUTH.
DON'T LET THEM THROUGH TO THE CAPITAL.
I SEE A LOT OF NAMES OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE EMPIRE HERE...
YOU DON'T NEED TO KNOW THE REASONS.
IT SAYS WE'RE TO LIE LOW IN SOME VILLAGE. HOW LONG WILL THE MISSION LAST?
UNTIL YOU'RE DONE WITH YOUR LIST.
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, CONTINUE THE MISSION UNTIL WE ORDER YOU TO DO OTHERWISE.
WAIT TO BE NOTIFIED.
THE TWO OF US ARE THE LAST ONES LEFT, HUH?
I GUESS I WON'T BE LIVING OUT THE REST OF MY LIFE IN PEACE AFTER ALL.
STILL UP THIS LATE?
I MUST HAVE LOST MY TOUCH IF YOU'RE SUSPICIOUS ENOUGH TO KEEP WATCH.
...
ACCORDING TO FRIEREN, YOU'RE A VETERAN WARRIOR.
I SEE THAT TOO NOW.
WHAT'S YOUR BUSINESS HERE SO LATE AT NIGHT?
HE MUST BE STRONG...
HE'S NOT JUST AN ORDINARY WARRIOR.
HE CONCEALS HIS PRESENCE TOO WELL.
I'M ONLY HERE FOR FRIEREN.
WHAT DID FRIEREN DO?
STEP ASIDE.
DON'T MAKE ME REPEAT MYSELF.
DO I LOOK LIKE SOMEONE WHO'D ABANDON HIS FRIENDS TO SAVE HIS OWN LIFE?
YOU DO.
AND THAT'S ALL THE MORE REASON WHY YOU WON'T RUN AWAY, ISN'T IT?
A LOT OF WARRIORS ARE LIKE THAT.
READY YOUR WEAPON.
WE CAN STILL TALK THIS OUT.
YOU UNDERESTIMATE ME.
YOU THINK YOU CAN TAKE ME DOWN AT THIS DISTANCE, DON'T YOU?
I'M SURE YOU'RE MORE SKILLED THAN AN OLD MAN LIKE ME.
YOU'VE GOT A LOT OF EXPERIENCE TOO. I CAN TELL.
BUT NOT ENOUGH.
THIS DISTANCE BETWEEN US...
...IS ENOUGH FOR ME TO STRIKE YOU.
WHAP
FRIE-
THUD
YOUR NAME IS NOT ON THE LIST.
WHMP

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